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NOTES AND QUERIES.

ORIGIN OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD INDIANS. Information is desired in regard to the authenticity and affiliations of the following narrative, purporting to relate the Indian tradition of the settlement of Martha's Vineyard:—

"The first Indian who came to the Vineyard was brought thither with his dog on a cake of ice. When he came to Gay Head he found a very large man whose name was Moshup. He had a wife and five children, — four sons and one daughter, — and lived in the Den. He used to catch whales, and then pluck up trees and make a fire and roast them. The coals of the trees and the bones of the whales are now to be seen. After he was tired of staying here, he told his children to go and play ball on the beach that joined No man's Land to Gay Head. He then made a mark with his toe across the beach, at each end, so deep that the water followed and cut away the beach, so that his children were in fear of drowning. They took their sister up and held her out of the water. He told them to act as if they were going to kill whales, and they were all turned into killers (a fish so called). The sister was dressed in large stripes; he gave them a strict charge always to be kind to her. His wife mourned the loss of her children so exceedingly that he threw her away. She fell upon Seconnett, near the rocks, where she lived some time, exacting contributions of all who passed by water. After a while she was turned into a stone. The entire shape remained for many years, but after the English came some of them broke off the arms, head, etc., but the most of the body remains to this day. Moshup went away, nobody knows whither. He had no conversation with the Indians, but was kind to them, by sending them whales &c ashore to them to eat. But after they grew thick around him he left them." (From an account communicated to the Mass. Hist. Society by Benjamin Bassett, of Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, who obtained it from an Indian of Gay Head, about the year 1790. Vide 1 M. H. S. Coll., i. 139.)

STORY OF BETTS HADDINGTON. (Vol. viii. p. 327.) The wide diffusion of this amusing little dramatic play, which might antecedently have been taken for only a local jest, illustrates the ease with which insignificant but entertaining inventions, attracting notice in virtue of their wit and oddity, attain traditional currency, and the obstinacy with which they retain a place in the recollection. Here may be reproduced two printed versions.

(a) From the Boston "Evening Transcript" (date not noted):—

"The story of 'Betts Haddington' is at least a century old, and its recitation in an old woman's voice, in the old-fashioned New England dialect, used to afford young people no end of amusement in the days of our grandmothers. A correspondent, S. E. H., who furnishes it, says, 'This is the story, as far as I remember it, that my aunt used to repeat to me, — a great deal depends upon the way it is told.'

“‘*Betts Hadd’ngton*. As I was sett’n’ cardin’ tow, who should I see but Betts Hadd’n’ton a ridin’ up to the door. I got up and shook the shives off my apron, and says I, “Betts, haow dew you dew?” for many ’s the day Betts and I have carded tow together. Says I, “Betts, dew come in and *set* up. Naow,” says I, “Betts, *dew* eat.” And I went daown cellar, and brought up doughnuts, some good paound cake, sech as anybody ’d have, some cheese, *sage* cheese, some diet drink, made of gill-go-over-the-ground, Robert-run-away, sassafras, checkerberry, and sech like, good to drink in the spring o’ the year to clear the blood. And my husband, he come in, and I gin him the wink, for we thought everything of Betts, and when she was married we gin her sech sights o’ things. We gin her a great keeler and a little keeler, and we gin her three airthen milk pans; they were cracked to be sure, but I biled ’em in milk and they were jest as good as new, and six airthen plates and cups and saucers. Some of the handles were gone and they wan’t all mates. And says I, “Now, Betts, dew eat,” and if she eat an aounce, she eat a pound. “Naow,” says she, “Miss Bishop, I must be goin’, for I have got an antic hoss and a new chay, and I live at that great seaport town Pawtucket.” Antic hoss and new chay!!! As for the hoss, the crows would n’t have picked him. He was wall-eyed and had the spring halt, and never was sound. The chay never was new; it was only second hand to begin with. As for Pawtucket, it’s no more a seaport than Seakonk Plain, not a bit. As for my husband, he sot heaps by Betts, and I gin him the wink and he says, “Betts, dew come agin.”” (Note 1729.)

(b) From “Stories of the Olden Time,” by Ednah D. Cheney:—

“*Conversation heard in a Stage Coach in New England*.—Friendship, Miss Bishop, is like a spider’s web, the least breath of air will destroy it.

“Now Bets Wade and I was gals together, all the difference was, I was rich, and Bets was poor! One day Bets got married, and there’s no end to the things my husband di’n’ gin that gal. He gin her sights and sights o’ things. He gin her a great keeler tub and a little keeler tub; he gin her two wooden bowls, painted yellow outside and red in; he gin her a churn and a churn dash, too, Miss Bishop; and he gin her a peck o’ raisins and a quart o’ tea. And that ungrateful wretch never sot foot in my house for two years!

“One day as I was sitting ca’ding tow before the house (I never thought myself above ca’ding tow, Miss Bishop), a chaise drove up to the door, and who should it be but Bets Wade! So I thought I must be polite in my own house, so I said, ‘Bets, come in.’

“She come in and she sot down. My husband come in; I hit him the wink not to speak to Bets. That touched her up pretty well, for my husband always sot everything by Bets, all the world; more too, sometimes. She said she had been living so long in that seaport town, Pawtucket, she thought she must once more visit her country friends. That seaport town, Pawtucket! That made me mad, Miss Bishop! It’s no more of a seaport town than Merrimac River. But I’d been too long in the woods to be scared by an owl, much more by Bets Wade!

"Bets asked if I would n't give her some tea? I told her I would if she'd wait till tea time come? So I went down into the cellar, and I got a pound o' butter, and a pound o' pound cake, and a pound o' shortcake, and two pounds o' sage cheese o' my own making. Bets Wade never put better in her mouth in her life, and I brought 'em up, and I put 'em on the table, and I said, 'Bets, eat!' and, good Lord, she did eat! If she eat one mouthful, she ate two pounds. I should think the critter had n't had anything to eat for a month.

"She said she believed she must go, for she had an antic horse and new shay. Antic horse! the critter wan't bigger than a Newfoundland dog; they had to tie the poor critter to a post to keep him from tumbling down! And as for the chaise, that was made in Adam's day, and then it wan't new! And if Bets Wade ever got a ride off that horse she did well. No, she never did! They had to take the poor critter into the chaise afore they got home."

Ellen Chase.

DEATH AT THE EBBING OF THE TIDE. It is a common belief among the natives of towns along the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound, that when a person lies at the point of death, his soul will not depart until the ebbing of the tide.

Geo. L. Parnell.

CARRYING CORPSES FEET FIRST. A correspondent desires information as to the origin of this custom. It seems only the natural way of speeding the dead on his journey; to look backwards would tend to defeat the departure, and therefore the end of the ceremony. So the body was properly placed with feet toward the door of the chamber of death. But in modern cultivated usage, these ideas and the associated practices have lost their currency.

W. W. N.

LOCAL MEETINGS AND OTHER NOTICES.

SUMMER MEETING OF THE AMERICAN FOLK-LORE SOCIETY, BOSTON, MASS., AUGUST 25, 1898. — In connection with the fiftieth Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at Boston, Mass., August 22 to 27, will be held a Summer Meeting of the American Folk-Lore Society. The Society will unite with Section H (Anthropology) of A. A. A. S. Thursday, August 25, will be set aside for the readings of papers relating to folk-lore, and members of this Society desiring to offer such papers will communicate their titles to W. W. Newell, Magnolia, Mass., or to M. H. Saville, Secretary of Section H, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park, New York, N. Y.

Energetic preparations have been made to render the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of the A. A. A. S. in every way an interesting and important occasion. It is to be hoped that there may be a correspondingly